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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

DICKEY, THOMAS L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2826

DATE MAILED: 03/19/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/083,163

Applicant(s)

HOKAZONO, AKIRA

Examiner

Thomas L Dickey

Art Unit

2826

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 February 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 23-44 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,4,6-8,11-13,15,17-19 and 22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3,5,9,10,14,16,20 and 21 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 February 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Art Unit: 2826

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restriction

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, claims 1-22 in Paper No. 7 is acknowledged.

Oath/Declaration

2. The oath/declaration filed on 02/27/02 is acceptable.

Drawings

3. The formal drawings filed on 02/27/02 are acceptable.

Priority

4. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Information Disclosure Statement

5. The Information Disclosure Statement filed on 02/27/02 has been considered.

Art Unit: 2826

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

A. Claims 1,2,4, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by KADOSH et al. (5,818,069).

Kadosh et al. discloses a semiconductor device having active regions connected together by an interconnect layer with first 64 and second 84 transistors formed spaced apart from each other in a semiconductor substrate 52, each of the first and second transistors having active regions 64B 84A, an isolation region 66 formed between the first 64 and second 84 transistors in the semiconductor substrate 52 for isolating the first 64 and second 84 transistors from each other, at least one slit 76, the at least one slit 76 consisting of one slit 76, formed in the surface of the isolation region 66 to allow those paired active regions 64B 84A of the first 64 and second 84 transistors which are opposed to each other with the isolation region 66 interposed therebetween to communicate with each other through it, the slit 76 having inner walls and a predetermined width, a conductive layer formed on the inner walls of the slit 76, and an interconnect layer having first and second portions (portions of part 78a which are integral thereto) respectively formed on the paired active regions 64B 84A of the first 64 and second 84

Art Unit: 2826

transistors so that each of them is electrically connected with a corresponding one of the paired active regions 64B 84A, and a third portion (also integral to part 78a) formed along the slit 76 on the isolation region 66, the first, second and third portions being made integral with one another, further comprising a contact portion 92 formed on the third portion of the interconnect layer, wherein the slit 76 has a minimum value of its width set to the minimum dimension determined by processing accuracy and a maximum value set such that the slit 76 can be substantially filled up with the third portion of the interconnect layer. Note figures 9-12 and column 8 lines 43-61 of Kadosh et al.

B. Claims 1,2,6-8,12,13, and 17-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by LIEN (5,693,975).

With regard to claims 1,2, and 6-8, Lien discloses a semiconductor device having active regions connected together by an interconnect layer with first 641 and second 643 transistors formed spaced apart from each other in a semiconductor substrate, each of the first 641 and second 643 transistors having active regions 611a and 621a; an isolation region formed between the first 641 and second 643 transistors in the semiconductor substrate for isolating the first 641 and second 643 transistors from each other; at least one slit (the opening taken up by conductive layer 644 - see figure 6d), wherein the at least one slit consists of one slit, formed in the surface of the isolation region to allow those paired active regions 611a and 621a of the first 641 and second 643 transistors which are opposed to each other with the isolation region interposed therebetween to communicate with each other through it, the slit having inner walls and

Art Unit: 2826

a predetermined width; a conductive layer 644 formed on the inner walls of the slit; and an interconnect layer 611b-621b having first and second portions respectively formed on the paired active regions 611a and 621a of the first 641 and second 643 transistors so that each of them is electrically connected with a corresponding one of the paired active regions 611a and 621a, and a third portion formed along the slit on the isolation region, the first, second and third portions being made integral with one another, wherein a depth of the slit is less than that of the isolation region, and the conductive layer 644 is a silicon-containing film, which is polysilicon. Note figures 6a-6g of Lien.

With regard to claims 12, 13, and 17-19, Lien discloses a semiconductor device having active regions connected together by an interconnect layer with first and second MOS transistors formed spaced apart from each other in a semiconductor substrate, each of the first and second MOS transistors having a gate electrode and active regions 611a and 621a; an isolation region formed between the first and second MOS transistors in the semiconductor substrate for isolating the first and second MOS transistors from each other; at least one slit (the opening taken up by conductive layer 644 - see figure 6d), wherein the at least one slit consists of one slit, formed in the surface of the isolation region to allow paired active regions 611a and 621a of the first and second MOS transistors which are opposed to each other with the isolation region interposed therebetween to communicate with each other through it, the slit having inner walls and a predetermined width; a conductive layer 644 formed on the inner walls of the slit; a gate electrode of another MOS transistor formed above the isolation region; and an in-

Art Unit: 2826

terconnect layer 611b-621b having first and second portions respectively formed on the paired active regions 611a and 621a of the first and second MOS transistors so that each of them is electrically connected with a corresponding one of the paired active regions 611a and 621a, and a third portion formed along the slit on the isolation region to ride on and be electrically connected with the gate electrode of another transistor, the first, second and third portions being made integral with one another, wherein a depth of the slit is less than that of the isolation region, and the conductive film 644 is a silicon-containing film, which is polysilicon. Note figures 6a-6g of Lien.

C. Claims 12,13,15, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by KIM (5,573,969).

Kim discloses a semiconductor device having active regions connected together by an interconnect layer with first and second MOS transistors formed spaced apart from each other in a semiconductor substrate 1, each of the first and second MOS transistors having a gate electrode 4 and active regions 15B 25B, an isolation region 31 formed between the first and second MOS transistors in the semiconductor substrate 1 for isolating the first and second MOS transistors from each other, at least one slit, wherein the at least one slit consists of one slit 7, formed in the surface of the isolation region 31 to allow paired active regions 15B 25B of the first and second MOS transistors which are opposed to each other with the isolation region 31 interposed therebetween to communicate with each other through it, the slit 7 having inner walls and a predetermined width, a conductive layer 35 formed on the inner walls of the slit 7, a gate electrode 4 of

Art Unit: 2826

another MOS transistor formed above the isolation region 31, and an interconnect layer having first 15C and second 25C portions respectively formed on the paired active regions 15B 25B of the first and second MOS transistors so that each of them is electrically connected with a corresponding one of the paired active regions 15B 25B, and a third portion 35 formed along the slit 7 on the isolation region 31 to ride on and be electrically connected with the gate electrode 4 of another transistor, the first 15C, second 25C, and third 35 portions being made integral with one another, and further comprising a contact portion formed on the third portion 35 of the interconnect layer, wherein the slit 7 has a minimum value of its width set to the minimum dimension determined by processing accuracy and a maximum value set such that the slit 7 can be substantially filled up with the third portion 35 of the interconnect layer. Note figures 3C and 3E of Kim.

Allowable Subject Matter

7. Claims 3,5,9,10,14,16,20, and 21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas L Dickey whose telephone number is 703-308-0980. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thu 8-6. Any inquiry concerning